

Message Text

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61

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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USIAC

USIA FOR IAA, IPS, IBS AFRICAN BRANCH

STATE FOR AF/C

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: ALI-FOREMAN ENTOURAGE IN
KINSHASA FOR FIGHT PREPARATIONS

1. ENTOURAGE OF 12 AMERICANS INVOLVED IN UPCOMING MUHAMMED ALI-GEORGE FOREMAN FIGHT HAS BEEN IN KINSHASA SINCE MAY 4 TO MEET WITH ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS CONCERNING PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIGHT NOW SCHEDULED FOR EARLY MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 25, SEPTEMBER 24 IN U.S.

2. GROUP INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF VIDEO TECHNIQUES INC. WHICH WILL HANDLE THE CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM, AND HEMDALE CORPORATION, INVOLVED IN THE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PROMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE FIGHT.

3. THE MANAGERS OF BOTH FIGHTERS ARE HERE, PLUS BARRY BURNSTEIN, PRESIDENT OF VIDEO TECHNIQUES, AND DON KING OF THE SAME ORGANIZATION. REPRESENTING HEMDALE CORPORATION ARE VICE PRESIDENT FRED SCHNEIER AND JOHN DALY.

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4. THE VISITING AMERICANS ARE QUOTED IN THE DAILY PRESS AS BEING "VERY PLEASED" WITH THEIR CONTACTS THUS FAR WITH ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS, AND EXPRESSED PUBLICLY THEIR SATISFACTION WITH EFFORTS MADE BY ZAIRE TO ACCOMMODATE THEIR WISHES. SCHNEIER REITERATED THIS FEELING PRIVATELY TO A USIS OFFICER, AS DID SEVERAL OTHERS, INCLUDING HERBERT MUHAMMED, MANAGER OF MUHAMMED ALI.

5. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THE GROUP HAS MET WITH, AMONG OTHERS, MINISTER OF NATIONAL ORIENTATION SAKOMBI AND BISENGIMANA RWEMA, DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF THE PRESIDENCY. SEVERAL MEMBERS EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THESE MEETINGS, PUBLICLY TO THE PRESS AND INFORMALLY TO THE USIS OFFICER.

6. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GROUP WILL MAKE PERIODIC VISITS BETWEEN NOW AND FIGHT TIME TO CONSULT ON PROGRESS OF FIGHT PREPARATIONS.

7. THE POST HAS LEARNED FROM MEMBERS OF THE ENTOURAGE THAT A PRESS CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 15 AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN NEW YORK.

8. THE PRESS CONFERENCE IS APPARENTLY PLANNED TO COINCIDE WITH ANNOUNCEMENT THAT GOZ WILL SPONSOR SCHOLARSHIP OR ACADEMIC CHAIR IN AFRICAN STUDIES BEGINNING NEXT YEAR. SPECIFIC UNIVERSITY NOT MENTIONED.

9. POST SUGGESTS IPS AND IBS COVER MAY 15 PRESS CONFERENCE, INCLUDING FEATURE STORY ON GOZ FUNDING OF SCHOLARSHIP IN AFRICAN STUDIES. ZAIRE PRESS, AS EXPECTED, RUNNING STORIES EVERY DAY ON WHAT SHAPES UP FROM MANY POINTS OF VIEW AS COLOSSAL SHOW. ALL LOCAL OUTPUT ALSO HEAVILY PROPAGANDISTIC, PRAISING PRESIDENT MOBUTU. THEREFORE, POST SUGGESTS IPS AND IBS UTILIZE IN UPCOMING FEATURES STATSIDE SOURCES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR STORIES PEGGED TO ASPECTS OF FIGHT FROM GITHERS' POINTS OF VIEW, PERSONALITY PIECES, INTERVIEWS, ETC.

10. POST SUGGESTS IPS FEATURES BE FILED USINFO. POST WOULD APPRECIATE ALSO RECEIVING ASAP SUPPLY OF PHOTOS OF PERSONALITIES INVOLVED -- BOTH FIGHERS, THEIR MANAGERS (SDLER FOR FOREMAN, HERBERT MUHAMMED FOR ALI), PHOTOS OF DON KING AND BURNSTEIN OF VIDEO

TECHNIQUES. POST COULD REPRODUCE THESE PHOTOS AND INCLUDE THEM WITH IPS-FURNISHED ARTICLES ON ASPECTS OF FIGHT. LOCAL SPORTS WRITERS VERY POORLY INFORMED ON GENERAL BOXING BACKGROUND. POST COULD PROFITABLY PLACE ARTICLES ON HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING, PARTICULARLY HEAVYWEIGHT, AND PROFILES WITH PHOTOS OF PAST CHAMPIONS.

11. ID #35CG-74-0362-IPS.

12. POST FEELS THIS LOOMS AS SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC RELATIONS EVENT AND PREPARED TO PLAY LOW-KEY ROLE IN PROMOTING POSITIVE ASPECTS OF FIGHT, THOUGH WE INTEND TO LET ZAIRIAN PRESS HANDLE PRELIMINARY TONNAGE OF ENCOMIUMS.

DECON UPON RECEIPT.
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